

Prairie AFRICAN

Issue 1 October 15–Nov 14, 2020

- understanding our roots, promoting our culture

Meet the African who broke an over 100 years record to become a member of the Manitoba Legislative Assembly. How has life been since then?



Culture

Page 3

A young African man on the frontlines of Covid-19 support in the city. How does he combine health policy management with running an association?



Life

Page 5

She has shared the stage with the likes of Jr Kelly, Lenn Hammond and Freddie McGregor. Find out if you know who this Winnipeger is. Plus a music icon's own drummer...



Music

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Why immigrant kids choose basketball. This is a question former Manitoba Bison player, Boll Majok, attempts to answer. I thought soccer was the king of all sports.



Sports

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We have to address the social determinants of health

- Uzoma Asagwara



The member representing Union Station, at the Manitoba Legislative Assembly, Uzoma Asagwara, has voiced their opinion about policies and legislation affecting Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour, in Manitoba, and is of the view that “under-served and under-represented communities be front and center, whenever a resolution, policy, or legislation is been tabled before the house.” Uzoma expressed this view, in a phone interview, with Prairie African.

The representative who was among one of three new members of the Manitoba Legislative Assembly, recently sworn into the over 150-year old assembly, also said that access to community resources should be equitable across representative groups

in the province. Some of these resources are so vital that they affect people’s chances of staying alive.

When asked what such communities must do to attract the resources they need, Uzoma said the communities should not shoulder the responsibility of attracting social resources, and that governments should be able to identify which communities are in greatest need and the resources ought to be provided. Uzoma mentioned that “all communities should have equitable access to food, healthcare and social services,” adding that it was their responsibility to amplify the voices of their constituency, in the legislative assembly, a task that is already being done, in their first tenure, in the house.

The member further expressed that,

“as a Nurse, I recognize that it’s easier to stay healthy, if you have financial resources. If you are educated and informed about health and wellness. If you live in a low-stress area, in terms of access to food, access to community resources, activities, things like that.”

Answering the question about whether they have any regrets since assuming office, the legislator said they have none, rather, heaping praise on their team at the constituency office, and the fact that they had some strong mentorship before venturing into politics.

Uzoma said they were already conversant with the realities of being a politician, through a strong mentorship and support system they already cultivated before running for office.

The member is of the opinion that, “the most important aspects of this job, is being honest with people, in terms of what you can do and what you can’t do, and what you hope to do,” they said.

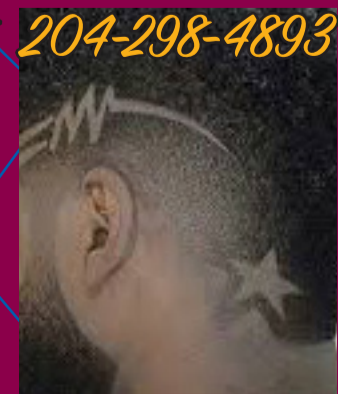
Uzoma also mentioned that it is very important to use “our platform to educate as many people about the political system and how systems of government actually function.” Also, that once “people have a greater understanding of how these systems function, then they recognize what is required to make certain changes happen, and they can be involved with seeing those changes take place.” The provincial legislator also encouraged citizens to make demands of their representatives, by asking questions.

read the interview on page 3

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Stanley Cup Tampa

The Tampa Bay Lightning are the new Stanley Cup Champions. They defeated the Dallas Stars 4 -2 on aggregate to clinch hockey's most coveted trophy this season. After defeating the New York Islanders in the Eastern Conference Final, the Bolts made no pretence about taking home the 2020 Stanley Cup, piling pressure on the Stars much early in the series. Both teams were tied, at 1 - 1, after game 2, before things got serious. The Bolts had a 3 - 1 lead going into game 5, after taking games three and four. The Stars fought back with a last minute rally to take game 5, bringing the series to 3 - 2, before the Tampa Bay Lightning brought out the best in them, after a 2 - 0 win in game 6, to bring the series to a close, and win their second Stanley Cup, since the history of the club. The Bolts last won the Stanley Cup, in 2004, with Coach John Tortorella, when they defeated the Calgary Flames, 2-1, in game seven, at the St. Pete Times Forum in Tampa, to win the series, 4-3, on aggregate. But one could make a case for longevity and continuity, having being with head coach, Jon Cooper, since 2013. The Lightning had appeared in two Stanley Cup finals, before now, winning one and losing the other, in 2014/15 season, when they tested the Chicago Blackhawks, only to lose the cup to the

Blackhawks, in game six, at the United Center, in Chicago. That experience would propel them to contend for more silverware, as they faced the Pittsburgh Penguins, in the 2015/16 Eastern Conference finals, only to come up short, after a couple star players were ruled out due to injuries. The Penguins would later go on to capture that year's Stanley Cup, at the expense of the San Jose Sharks. And just two seasons ago, they returned to play in the Eastern Conference final, on the wings of a superlative performance that year. The Lightning finished the season atop the conference table, and were named top seed, in the Eastern Conference, for that year's Stanley Cup Playoffs. Many fans and hockey analysts expected the Lightning to strike again. This time, they were pitted against the Capitals, in the Eastern Conference finals, after eliminating the Penguins, in the second round, only to come up short, again, to a team that went on to lift the Stanley Cup that year. Then came last season, when the Lightning emerged winners of the President's Trophy, for the first time, a feat that cemented their belief in winning more silverware. They also finished the regular season atop the Eastern Conference table, with a remarkable win, against the Boston Bruins, in their final game of the

season. So, when they got past the New York Islanders, in this year's Conference Finals, many were already seeing them as the team to lift this year's Stanley Cup, having banished the ghosts of past years' failures. You will recall that the Tampa Bay Lightning eliminated the Columbus Blue Jackets, in the first round, of this year's Stanley Cup playoffs, and also defeated the Boston Bruins, in the second round, before dispatching the New York Islanders, in the Eastern Conference Finals, to set up a historic date with the Dallas Stars, in this year's Stanley Cup Finals, and the rest is now history. The Tampa Bay Lightning are the new NHL Stanley Cup champions, after putting in the hard work, covid or no covid, to be that team which no other team could stop their advance, enroute to lifting this year's Stanley Cup. Their doggedness was on display for all to see, as in the game, against Columbus, when they left it late, in the fifth overtime. And a double-overtime win, against the Bruins, in a four game win streak, after losing the first game in the series. And, also, their tenacity, in the 8-2 trouncing of the New York Islanders, in the very first game of the Eastern Conference Final. It will be recalled that the Montreal Canadians, the most successful team in the NHL, with 24 titles, did not make it past the first round.

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 Interview

Uzoma Asagwara
 MLA Union Station

That Building wasn't designed with Someone like Me in Mind.

Wow, a Black person in the Manitoba Legislative Assembly, for the first time, in over a hundred years? Yes, that is right. No one thought it right to consider a Black man or woman worthy of the exalted position, in those days, so much for systemic racism eh? Now, we not only have one, but three persons of colour, all at once, in our legislative house. So, we thought it wise to sit down with one of them, who happens to be unapologetically queer; to talk about their experiences, from electioneering to working in that Victorian-style building, that they say, obviously wasn't designed for persons like them. Please read excerpts of the interview with Uzoma Asagwara, representing Union Station, at the Manitoba Legislative Assembly.

Hello Uzoma, and welcome to our platform, *Prairie African*, a grassroots publication upholding the truth in our society, and also making sure that the voice of the voiceless is loudly heard in our community.

Thank you Richard. It's my pleasure to come on this platform, which, I believe, is out there to represent the Black communities here in Canada. I particularly love the name, *Prairie African*, I think it's apt, especially in these present times.

Thank you, once again, Uzoma. Just so you know, some of these questions have come in from the community. We have questions from a 9 year-old

as well as questions from 50 year-olds. Wow, that's great. Really looking forward to hear those questions, Richard, and I hope to do my best in answering them.

Thank you. Here's the first question. How has your life been since you became a member of the Manitoba Legislative Assembly?

My Life has always been very busy. I've always been a very active person in the community. And, with my work, as a Psychiatric Nurse (Addictions Specialist) as well. My life has changed now in that, because I have a different platform, in an advocacy capacity, I now work, in new ways that are really helpful for people, in this role. So, I'm probably just as busy as I was before, but in a new way. I'm certainly learning a whole lot too. I'm meeting with people all the time. The frequency is new for me; people, organizations, community members, and advocacy groups. Learning what the issues are, how I can best be supportive, and how we can work together for the advancement of our communities.

What has been your greatest joy since you assumed office?

My greatest joy since entering office is the successful effort of the community in doing something historic. The campaign was a community effort, it was incredibly rewarding to the community having put in so much effort in the campaign. And on a personal level, it is very powerful for me to see the impact within the Nigerian community. The elections itself went viral in Nigeria. It

was incredible to see, and to see many Nigerians across the world celebrating this win, is incredibly heart-warming.

It's like something good is just beginning to happen for Nigerians. Other Nigerians also won elective positions in Canada and the United States as well.

Yes, and that's amazing. I love to see it. I love to see Nigerians get involved in the political realm here in Canada, or even the United States. And I love to see young folks especially young women getting involved. You know, often times we see our folks focused on putting food on the table, building careers, raising families, and staying safe and healthy, understandably. It is great to see us, as a community, start to be involved in new arenas, and ensure that there is equitable representation in politics for our own community.

How can you help protect Indigenous Peoples and their lands?

As for myself, and I think for other Black people, I'm a first-generation Canadian. I recognize that these aren't my own traditional lands. These are traditional lands, here on Treaty 1 of the Anishinaabe, Cree, Oji-Cree, Dakota Dené and Métis People, and the homeland of the Métis Nation. And it is incredibly important for me to recognize whose lands we're situated on, and to be a listener and an ally to Indigenous Peoples achieving their own self-determined outcomes.

Do you have any plans to deal with racial inequalities in our province, if so, can you share them with us?

In my role as MLA, my responsibilities are to amplify the voices of my constituency in the legislative assembly. My plans are to make sure that communities that are under-served, under-represented, and intentionally oppressed within systems, in our province and country, are unequivocally amplified, in the Manitoba legislature.

To ensure that whenever a resolution, policy, or legislation is being drafted, that Black, Indigenous, and people of colour are not an afterthought, but are central in decision-making. And to me, that is a critically important part of addressing systemic discrimination and systemic racism. Making sure that in the spaces where these policies are being drawn-up, places that uphold systems of oppression, that we are pushing back

"I recognize that these aren't my own traditional lands. These are traditional lands, here on Treaty 1, of the Anishinaabe, Cree, Oji-Cree, Dakota Dené and Métis People, and the homeland of the Métis Nation. And it is incredibly important for me to recognize whose lands we're situated on, and to be a listener and a proponent for them."



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Contributors are welcome

Welcome to our platform,
PrairieAfrican, a grassroots
publication, upholding the truth in
our society, and, also, making sure
that the voice of the voiceless is
loudly heard in our community.

One of our aims is, to make
sure that we bring to the fore,
successful African peoples, in the
prairies, and around the world -
business magnates, technocrats,
sports personalities, politicians,
environmental activists, and many
more. We will continue to present
role models before our young ones,
to help guide them into the path of
success.

Only African people can tell their
own story the way they want it
told, and the way it should be told.
It is important to have a voice, as
a people, and we are offering this
platform as your voice.

Together, let us provoke

Our Mission

community participation. Let your
community know how you feel,
what ails you and how we can all
rally around to help one another.

Africans are a great people. We
cannot afford to leave important
affairs affecting Africans, and people
of African heritage and descent, in
the hands of non-Africans.

Are you celebrating, this platform
is also for you. Invite friends and
family to join in your celebration,
like is done in our culture.

Minority rights are equal rights.
We will see to it that it is respected.
We will advocate for more resources
for the inner city, for example, and
make sure we do not keep quiet
when a word needs to be spoken in
season. We have come too far away
from home, only to settle for less.

We want to thank everyone that

has contributed in making sure this
publication see the light of day.

Most especially, we want to
appreciate ACOMI, for blazing the
trail, for many decades now, and
helping to serve as an intellectual,
moral and cultural compass for
African people, who have found
themselves here, one way or another.

We also appreciate the many
African businesses that have sprung
up, in every corner of the city,
helping to make us all feel at home.
These businesses, knowingly or
unknowingly, have also contributed,
in no small measure, to give us a
sense of belonging, while sojourning
in a distant land. They demonstrate
the resilience of the African spirit.
We salute you.

Finally, please send me an email,
text, message or a letter, letting us
know what you think about our
publication. Thank you all.

In case you missed it



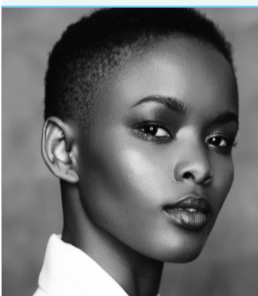
Tanzanian
born Ghanaian
Architect, known
for designing
notable structures
around the world,
Sir, David Frank
Adjaye, OBE RA,
will receive the United Kingdom's
highest honour for architecture, the
Royal Gold Medal. Adjaye will be the
first black architect to win the over 173
year-old prize. He's 54.



Nigerian
born writer,
Chimamanda
Ngozi Adichie
recently released
another fictional
piece titled
"Zikora." This
prolific Nigerian author whose mother
was the first female registrar at the
University of Nigeria is based in the
US, and has won numerous awards for
her work in Literature. She's 43.



Nigerian-born
Canadian lawyer,
Kelechi Madu,
recently became
Alberta's Minister
of Justice and
Solicitor General.
Elected into
Alberta's Legislative Assembly, in
2019, this University of Lagos trained
lawyer becomes the first African to rise
to the office of Solicitor General, in the
history of Canada. He's 47.



Tanzanian born
Flaviana Matata
is mentioned in,
Forbes magazine,
among the top
seven successful
models in Africa.
Born in Shiyanga,
Tanzania, and raised by her father,
after the loss of her mother in a boat
mishap, this beauty queen and model
extraordinaire holds a diploma in
Electrical Engineering, from Arusha
Technical College. She's only 33.



Nigerian born
lawyer, David
Ndudim, was
recently named
judge of the
superior court of
California. The
Lincoln Law
school graduate, from Abia state, has
over 19 years experience in handling
immigration cases. He's 48.



South Sudanese
born, Ger Duany
is one of Africa's
success stories.
This "village boy"
as he describes
himself, has
come a long way,
from tending to his family's cattle,
like his forefathers did, to becoming
a Hollywood success. This former
child soldier is now UN Goodwill
Ambassador for the East and Horn of
Africa region. He's 41.



That Kenya is
one of the few
countries in the
world to have a
nationwide ban
on single-use
plastic bags, has
a lot to do with
James Wakibia, a photographer turned
environmental activist, who got the
government and people of Kenya to
agree with him on the urgent need to
stop environmental pollution. Wakibia
achieved this mainly through social
media tweets. He's 35.



Ethiopian born
pilot, Captain
Amsale Gualu,
is the first female
captain, in the
history of Ethiopia,
to fly a Boeing
767, 777, and 787.
She also flew the Bombardier, in 2010,
when she became a Captain. This Bahir
Dar born pilot who graduated from
Addis Ababa University, with a degree
in Architecture, captained an entire
female crew on an international flight
in 2017. She's 42.



Liberian born
Saran Kaba Jones
is an advocate for
clean water in sub-
saharan Africa, for
which she has won
numerous awards,
among them, the
MTV Africa Music Leadership Award,
in 2015, and Time Magazine Next
Generation Leader award, in 2016. Her
organization, FACE Africa, works to
ensure water, sanitation, and hygiene
(WASH) infrastructure in rural Africa.
She's 38.

We've been Lucky with the whole Covid thing.

Thank you for taking time off your busy schedule to talk to us. Can you please introduce yourself to our audience.

My name is Kwabena Ankoma Osei-Bonsu. I am currently the vice-president for the Ghanaian Union of Manitoba. I've been the vice-president since last year, 2019.

And what do you do for work?

I am a Respiratory Therapist. I work in the St. Boniface Hospital, as a Clinical Lead, where we provide acute care to patients in the intensive care unit and emergency, as well as, in my role, I do a lot of teaching, both at the University of Manitoba and bedside, with the U of M students. Predominantly, most of the teaching is done at the bedside, in regarding ventilator care and respiratory care.

That means you must be very busy these days, amid the Covid-19 pandemic, because it appears what you do is somehow intertwined with what is happening right now. Is that correct?

Yes, it is very intertwined. Actually, I am quite busy because of that. I was part of the group that started putting in place policies and plans for caring of covid patients as they came through the hospital. It's kind of a region-wide group, that puts together best practices for clinicians to be safe, for physicians, respiratory therapists, nurses and everyone to be safe while caring for covid patients, as well as how

to actually treat covid patients. From my perspective, it's mostly how to ventilate covid patients, when they do come in with acute cases and will be needing ventilators. So, there's a lot of in servicing and teaching, while making sure our staff stay safe, with adequate PPE protection and adequate knowledge, on the best protocols to follow to ventilate covid patients. And thankfully, our numbers have not been that high, here in Manitoba. We've had enough time to be able to prepare, but you can never be too prepared for these situations, especially when we see the numbers coming from other places like Toronto, Quebec, earlier on, in Vancouver, New York, New Orleans, and even, from Europe. Our colleagues there have been through quite a bit. So, we're picking on things that they've done, things that have worked, and we are adjusting our practices here, in our anticipation of if things do get bad.

So, you're making the point that we're kind of lucky having been on the background earlier on, right?

Yes we were indeed lucky in that regard. It gave us enough time to be able to prepare.

So, does working as a Respiratory Therapist put you in the frontlines of the whole activity?

Well, a bit of both, Respiratory Therapists are frontline.

They're completely frontline. They're right in there, when airways are being managed, and ventilatory care is needed. Respiratory Therapists are frontline. I am also a Clinical Lead, so, I work more in the background but I still do respiratory work. So, if it gets busy, I do go to the frontline. I also cover sick calls in the department as well. So, I do get right into the frontline but predominantly I do most of my work now in a leadership role. Not just leadership right at bedside, but more so, policy writing and education. That's what my role has been for the past year. I've only been in the Clinical Lead role for the past year.

So, I'm just curious. Did you study Medicine, or how did you get into all this, in the first place?

I studied Medical Rehabilitation. The Rady faculty of Health Sciences houses various departments like dentistry, pharmacy, nursing and medicine. So, it's one of the departments under Health Sciences, at the University of Manitoba. You mentioned that



Socio-cultural

you're the vice president for the Ghana Union of Manitoba, So, I'm guessing that makes you a Ghanaian, right?

Yes, it's one of the criteria for being the vice-president. You either have to be Ghanaian or of Ghanaian heritage. I grew up in Ghana and emigrated here with my parents and siblings. So, I'm definitely Ghanaian and Canadian too. Or better put, a Canadian of Ghanaian descent.

How are you able to manage your busy schedule at work with helping to run the affairs in the Ghanaian community?

First of all, I'll say it's been a great balancing act. Our members have also been very helpful. Knowing when to delegate and when to ask for help is really important. You learn that very quickly when you start working in the hospital. You learn what your limitations are, the things you need to pass on, because there are people who can do it better than you can. And I think that's part of the idea of leadership, knowing your limitations and when to delegate.

So, you're saying that your training as a Medical Rehabilitation Specialist has helped to groom you for the leadership role you now play in your community?

Yes, it has played a huge role.

How long has the Ghanaian association existed for?

The Ghana Union of Manitoba has been in existence since June 4th, 1982. It was founded as a dance group, by three eminent Ghanaians, all students at the time, (Drs. Ishmael Bruce, Moses Agbanyo and Janet Panford) and they presented their first performance, in Winnipeg, in 1982. It was formed as a cultural organization to promote Ghanaian culture, and up till this day, we have Ghanaian youth actively involved in our dance group and media team. Our first president was Samuel Asante, and the current president is Anderson Assuah.

How can new immigrants from Ghana locate you when they arrive here and need assistance?

New Ghanaian immigrants can locate us on the internet, and through the ACOMI center.

It was a pleasure talking to you sir.

Thank you. It's my pleasure as well.

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UZOMA Interview

Continued from page 3

against that, within those very spaces. **If you have the opportunity to advise the Liberal Government of Justin Trudeau, regarding the We'suwet'in pipeline project, what would you tell them?**

Fundamentally, I would say the government needs to action the recommendations that have come from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The government needs to stop fighting against Indigenous children and the rights of Indigenous children in federal courts. The government needs to finally begin to action reconciliation at the federal level. The government has a responsibility to do so, after a long overdue acknowledgement of the rights of Indigenous Peoples. The Liberal government of Justin Trudeau has, at times, made promises that they have not followed through on, and that is a disservice to all Canadians.

Drug addiction seems to be ravaging our inner city. If you could change one thing in the province, regarding drug addiction, what would that be?

Well, one thing I would say very clearly, is that problematic substance use and addictions is a problem everywhere, not just in the inner city. The issues and the challenges of addiction are amplified in the inner city by rate of poverty, lack of respectful and adequate housing and food insecurity. All of these things are amplified in the core. Foundationally, what we need to do is commit to addressing the root causes of these issues. We have to address these social determinants of health. We have to look at prevention. We have to address childhood trauma. We have to funnel, and pour and commit financial resources to addressing the root issues. That is how we're going to see the long-term positive outcome. And, especially in the core, where we see incredibly dynamic and diverse communities of colour, the priority needs to be around addressing those social determinants of health. And that will require political will in terms of reallocating resources to the services and the organizations and resources that can address those root causes in a positive and long-term manner.

Winnipeg as a city is growing in population. Inner city kids have little or no resources to help them engage in safe play. How can we attract more resources for immigrant populations to help them play safely?

I don't think it should be a matter of us attracting the resources. The resources should be provided. I'm someone who

grew up in a working-class family, with university educated parents. There were privileges that I was afforded because I grew up in St. Norbert, had no serious health issues etc. I recognize that it's easier to stay healthy if you have financial resources. If you are educated and informed about health and wellness. If you live in a low-stress area, in terms of access to food, access to community recreation, activities, things like that. It always surprises me that we don't inherently understand that access to all of these things should be equitable; and, if not equitable, then we work towards that, by putting those resources in communities and areas who are working toward achieving equity. I don't think it's the responsibility of targeted and marginalized communities to attract resources. It is the responsibility of people who already have disproportionate access to those resources to redirect them to the communities and the areas that would benefit most from accessing them.

Have you ever worked remotely, if so, what changes did you make to adapt to an at-home work environment?

That's a great question. I will say this, in my professional capacity, I have never really had to work remotely before, so, that was the challenge for me. I really appreciate the value of in-person interaction and engagement, and working in spaces that kind of naturally cue me to do the work that I'm intended to do. So, it's a bit of an adjustment for me working remotely and then having to associate my personal space with work, and I think that's an adjustment that many people can relate to, but because I have a history of being a community organizer, I'm actually quite comfortable working from home in certain roles. If they're organizing community gatherings or protests or events, that's all work that I would specifically do, either from my own space, or I would go out in the community in different spaces, and work in that manner. So, I had a little bit of experience from the community organizer role. It was a new skit for me in terms of a work/job capacity and to be honest, my preference is most definitely to work in work spaces.

Can you explain why citizenship applications have been handled at snail speed?

I certainly appreciate the concern and the frustration there. In 2020, you would hope that there will be mechanisms in place to make situations like this much easier to navigate, so that people's ability to become citizens aren't entirely affected or significantly delayed. This

is actually the first time that this is being brought to my direct attention, and is something that I would bring forward to my colleague who is the critic for immigration, as well as my federal counterpart, who is



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the MP for this riding. The good thing about having strong relationships with other MLA's and federal MPs is you hear about these issues, make sure they're heard, and work towards making sure they are addressed. And so, I will be bringing their concerns forward, and if they (the people affected) like, they can reach out to me and we can discuss it further.

Is it easy to reach out to you?

Yeah, absolutely! My office is easily accessible. They can call my office. They can message me over social media. They can email me. They can write me a letter. Whatever way is easier for people to contact me, I encourage folks to do so.

That's impressive. I really saw you have various avenues for people to reach out to you, which is great. I guess they can Facebook message you as well eh?

Absolutely!

What has been your biggest regret, if any, since you joined parliament?

You know what, I don't. I'm a person who works hard not to live with regret. I certainly try to recognize lessons and experiences that I have, good and bad, and this case, in regards to the election and politicking, I don't have any regrets. I am immensely grateful for the opportunity to serve our community and want to do the best possible that I can, in this role, as a public servant. But I'm not in this alone. And I think that's something that we don't talk about enough. That no one in their capacity as an elected official does the work

by himself. I've got a great team in Union Station. I work alongside some amazing people in our NDP caucus, and the work that we do is alongside the communities that we represent. So, I'm not in this alone. I'm accountable to many different communities, and that helps me to do this work in a good way, in a way where I'm always looking for the lessons, and I'm not living with any regrets.

Some politicians make a lot of promises before getting into office, and on getting there, they find out reasons why they cannot keep their campaign promises. Have you made any such promises that upon assuming office, you discovered was a tall order?

No. I'm fortunate that I have very strong mentorship before entering politics.

“I'm fortunate that I have very strong mentorship before entering politics. Nahanni Fontaine, who has been an NDP MLA for about four years now, and, as an activist, Bernadette Smith, who is an MLA in Point Douglas, are folks who let me know the realities of being a politician before I ran for office.”



October 2nd

Happy Birthday to a Logistics and Supply Chain professional, Mr Tunji Johnson, who added another feather to his cap, on October 2nd. Your friends and family wish you many happy returns.

Rejoicing

Congratulations to the family of Mr & Mrs Uyi, on the birth of their new baby girl. We wish the whole family good health, and may the Lord continue to protect you all.



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UZOMA Interview

Continued from page 6

Nahanni Fontaine, who has been an NDP MLA for about four years now, and, as an activist, Bernadette Smith, who is an MLA in Point Douglas, are folks who let me know the realities of being a politician before I ran for office. And I think, one of the most important aspects to do in this job, is being honest with people. Being honest in terms of what you can do, and what you can't do, and what you hope to do, what you're going to work to do, is really important. And also to use our platform to educate as many people, about the political system and how systems of government actually function, is very important. Once people have a greater understanding of how these systems function, then they recognize what is required to make certain changes happen, and how they can be involved with seeing those changes take place. It's an opportunity to equip and empower people with the information they need in order to be able to better trust politicians, and make demands of their representatives.

Are you in support of BIPOC's recent demands to "defund the police?"

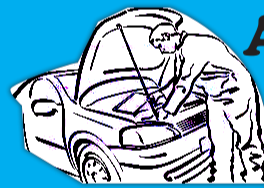
So, that is a demand that comes from across a number of organizations within the communities of colour. And in regards to defunding the police, to me it is a common sense action to say that we should be reallocating financial resources to addressing the root causes

to issues that are increasingly becoming prevalent in our communities. That to me is good common sense. When you address the social determinants of health. When you address trauma. When you address root causes, then you will have long-term positive outcomes that include healthier and more well communities.

I understand that these organizations are not just saying send the police home, or fire the police. They seem to be saying, let us reappraise where all of our tax dollars are going. Are there better avenues to solve some of the problems we have other than using the police?

Exactly! It is important for people to understand what we mean by safety. We're talking about the issues and situations that make people feel unsafe. The police will be the first ones to tell you that a significant proportion of the calls they respond to, they have no business responding to. Police are being called to respond to situations that they do not have the training, the expertise, or the experience to be dealing with. And so, why wouldn't we put those resources into allowing for other mechanisms to address those situations, so that everybody is safe. So that everybody is healthy. Why wouldn't we put funding into things that would create environments so that those situations wouldn't even be taking place? That's what we should be working towards.

Thanks for answering these questions.



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Natalya

Meet Natalya, the dancehall Crooner

Like many successful stars before her, she has to work the ropes, climbing all the way to success. Natalya, as she's known in music and entertainment circles, is a reggae



and dancehall queen in her own right. Born Nathalie Patricia Inez Waite, to immigrant parents from Jamaica, she began her musical career as a child. As early as 5 years, she was already fiddling with dad's musical box, and as she says, "that subwoofer system kinda stirred me up, right into the music." This was evident as she would sing any and everywhere she could, later leading her to find the love for performing in front of many. Natalya

has opened the stage for many acclaimed artists, and performed with the likes of Jr. Kelly, Lenn Hammond, Sean Desman, Freddie McGregor and Akon, among many other international stars, and hopes to become a full-fledged international artiste herself, someday. Natalya was born and raised in Winnipeg, and was the first and only girl among four children. She has collaborated with many local artists and musicians within the Winnipeg scene and is excited to show you what else she has to offer. She wants to share her love of reggae and dancehall music to all who will listen. Natalya describes reggae as a mellow and relaxing tune, and dancehall, like infusing rock into reggae. Natalya can be contacted through her Instagram handle @natalya_music as well as on Facebook.

According to her, she's one with bliss whenever she's singing. She says "I'm connected mind, body and soul, whenever I'm on stage, that's what I love to do. I really love performing on stage and entertaining people." This accomplished artiste, who holds a diploma in Business Marketing, from Red River College, also dabbles into acting when the occasion demands, and has featured in a few movies. This queen of the dancehall

Bob's Drummer



Bob Marley was an icon, in fact, the world's music icon. But how many people remember the African that made the world dance to his beats. Introducing Babatunde Olatunji, drummer extraordinaire, educator and social activist. Born in Ajido, near Badagry, in present day Nigeria, Olatunji specialized in World music and Apala. He was educated at the famous Morehouse College in Atlanta, Georgia, and New York University, and was signed to the Columbia label in 1957. This African music icon recorded with many prominent artists of his time, including, Cannonball Adderley, Horace Silver, Quincy Jones, Pee Wee Ellis, Mickey Hart, and the great Bob Dylan. He also composed music for the Hollywood film, *Raisin in the Sun*, and Spike Lee's *She's Gotta Have it*. He is reputed for making the Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev take off his shoes and dance, when he performed at the UN General Assembly, and was the wizard on drums while performing with Bob Marley at the 1979 Amandla Festival. Olatunji also toured the American south with Dr. King.



How Many Kids Will Turn Up On The Courts

When this is all over?

Why Immigrant Kids Choose Basketball

No matter how hard it is to fathom, the present pandemic will one day become a thing of the past, and kids everywhere will have to return to the basketball courts to play their favourite game. Immigrant kids are not left out. In fact, immigrant kids, especially African kids have taken to basketball, in an absolutely unbelievable fashion. Many African parents, my humble self included, are surprised to see their kids play basketball instead of soccer, once considered the king of sports. In this issue, we sat down with

a former Manitoba Bison player, Bol Majok, to analyse why immigrant kids, particularly from Africa, easily take to basketball rather than soccer or hockey. The revelations are worth settling down for. Please enjoy the interview, with Mr Bol, presented below.

Let us have you introduce yourself to our readers please.

My name is Bol Majok. I just turned 30 years old, and from South Sudan. I was born in a city called, Gogrial, now in South Sudan. My family moved from Sudan to Egypt before arriving in

Canada, in 2001. Then I just turned 12. I grew up in the St James area, an area I consider pretty concentrated. We lived in the midst of a lot of Caucasian folks. I have an older brother who attended St James Collegiate. I attended George Waters Middle School, and ended up at St James Collegiate, where I played a lot of sports.

I guess basketball was one of them? Oh yes. We played community sports like Rising Stars. I even played at the district level. It was a kind of league based on what area of the city you lived. I played in the West District because that was where I lived and schooled, at the time. My school was considered a triple A. There was also the North District league, the Inner City District and so on. So, my district would naturally constitute schools like Sturgeon Heights, formerly called Silver Heights, Oak Park and the rest. I also played U16 Provincials.

Was this your first contact with the sport?

I remember, when I was in Egypt, we did play basketball, at school, but it was not as organized as when I came to Middle School in Canada. I was in grade 4 or 5 at the time.

What is the name of the school?

It was called St Wanga School, I believe, in Cairo. It was a Catholic school. My family lived in Egypt for two and a half years. I kinda understood the game from there. I was already a fan, having been exposed to the NBA through television.

So, those would be your humble beginnings then, right?

Yes, kinda. I remember we came in May, and school was just ending then. I attended Sister Mac for Summer school that year. Then we lived Downtown before moving to a better area.

I have a nagging question. Why do you think immigrant kids will take to basketball when they arrive here rather than soccer or hockey?

Yes. In my honest opinion, when we arrive here as immigrants. I can only speak as an African, because we have other immigrants from Asia or even Europe. I can speak about Africans,

particularly South Sudanese. Sports is huge with Africans. We are already exposed to a lot of soccer back home, almost the only sport most of us know. So, when we come in here, we want to play sport, but we don't know what kind. Media exposure of sport generally dictates what kind of sport we play. Here, in North America, Basketball is huge. Most of us know the names of Kobe Bryant, and Lebron James through the media. Again, when new immigrants land, the parents are still trying to find their feet. Some of them work two or three jobs, and don't have enough time for the kids. So, they naturally gravitate towards a cheaper option.

Are you saying basketball is a cheaper option than soccer?

Yes, It is cheaper. Coupled with the fact that if you landed in the inner city, there is the probability that you'll end up being surrounded by peers of the same background, and that can also make you play a certain sport, even if you were gifted in other sports.

A good kind of peer pressure eh?

Yes, you can say that. My mom, who raised me will prefer i'm in the gym, all day, rather than hanging out with the to be continued



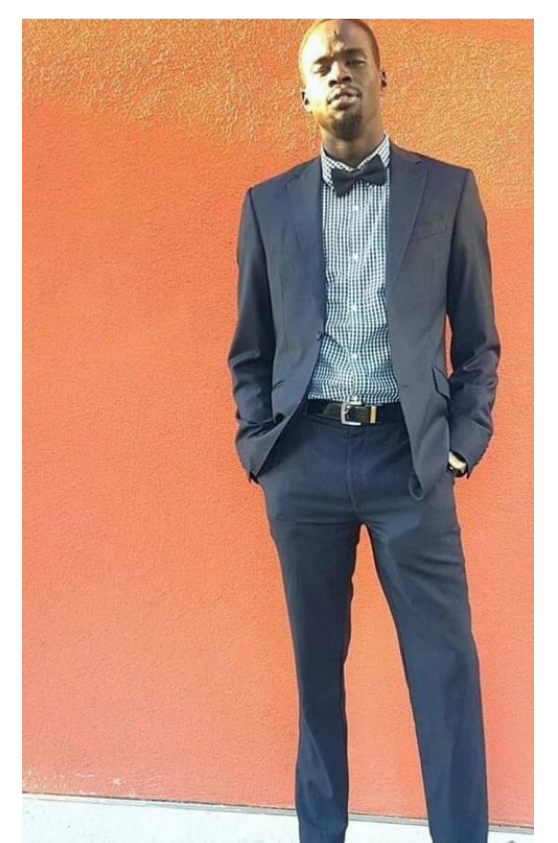
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How has Soccer

fared in Manitoba?

- Looking at Clubs and Youth Development

Soccer does not take a break in Manitoba, it is one of the sports that is played all year round. From May to October (Outdoors), and from October to March (Indoors). As a result, there is the need to manage the affairs of both players and officials in a well organised manner, especially if Manitoba hopes to produce the best players on the continent, in the coming years. The just concluded UEFA Champions League finals featured a 19 year old Canadian, Alphonso Davies, formerly of the Vancouver Whitecaps, who did Canada proud, not just by exhibiting such discipline in marking Lionel Messi out of a game, but also for his level-headedness playing at the top of his profession at such a young age. And, also, for making the final UEFA team list of the best soccer players in the year 2020. Davies, an immigrant, from Ghana, and born to Liberian parents, who were fleeing the second Liberian Civil War, to Ghana, arrived Canada when he was only five years old. He was the first player born in the 2000s to feature in an MLS match, and the youngest player to play for the Canadian Men's National Soccer Team. Success, they say, begets success. How can Manitoba replicate the achievements of the Edmonton Soccer Association? Will a Manitoba youth play in the English Premiership next season or two from now? Will we see a Canadian, probably from Manitoba, in next year's UEFA Champions League finals? Only conscious management of our youth can help attain such high and lofty goals. The soccer clubs are already doing a good job with the physical and technical aspects of the game. The Manitoba Soccer Association is one of the oldest sports associations in Canada. Formed in Brandon, in 1896, the Manitoba Soccer Association is a member of the Canadian Soccer Association, and the governing body for soccer in Manitoba. As presently constituted, the Peter Muir led board needs to be a bit more divergent to be able to promise the delivery of such

grandiose results. The board may not be able to cater for the soccer needs of a multi-cultural Canadian society, and needs to start making wide consultations with various groups, among them, immigrant populations. They will need to come down from their high horses to be able to spot unique talents in the inner city and elsewhere, and place them on accelerated programmes that will culminate in the kind of results we all expect to see, in the not too distant future. There is also the Manitoba Major Soccer League, sanctioned by both the MSA and the CSA to conduct indoor and outdoor adult soccer leagues, with its Premier Division being the highest level of amateur league participation in the province. Winners of the MSA Cup represent the province, by fighting for the Challenge Trophy, the highest trophy recognised by the CSA in amateur competitions. Founded in 1971, the MMSL has had to change its name twice. It was formerly known as the Manitoba Central Soccer League (from 1971 - 1990) and the Molson Super Soccer Alliance (from 1990 - 1999), and currently overseen by a volunteer board. This soccer body also appears to have done a lot for soccer in Manitoba, but can still do more. There is the urgent need to break from the administrative bottle necks that prevent such leagues from producing world beaters, and start the introduction of dynamic programmes that would cast a wide net across the city, making sure that no talents are lost irrespective of whether they come from rich or poor backgrounds. And there is, also, the Winnipeg Youth Soccer Association created, in 1982, to cater for youth soccer within Winnipeg and environs. The WYSA also runs a league for its members aged 9-18years. The association actually has four leagues in place. They are, the U9-U18 Recreational League, the U9-U12 Developmental League, and the U13 - U18 Premier League. The association also runs an Indoor High School Soccer League. They more or less provide kids

the opportunity to play soccer in the province, irrespective of their age. Again, the need for the introduction of dynamic programmes, within its existing setup, to ensure no talents fall through the cracks, irrespective of backgrounds. As already mentioned, the clubs are doing a good job, at the moment, even though they could lower their fees to encourage more talents into their pool. At the end, all of these bodies would be sharing in the glory, when (and not if) one of

their wards make it to the top. It is a new dawn for soccer in our province, and we all have to come together to reclaim that top spot in the field of sports, for soccer is indeed the king of all sports. Many parents, like those of Alphonso Davies, who by the way, only became a Canadian citizen, only three years ago, are eager to produce world beaters given the necessary incentives. Are there associations working towards the development of the game in the inner city? ?





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Champions League Draws



Nigeria Wins Manitoba African Cup Of Nations

Nigeria's Super Eagles beat the DRC to lift this year's Manitoba African Cup of Nations, a mock tournament designed to entertain and bring Africans living in Manitoba together. The Eagles defeated the DRC in a penalty shootout, after both teams failed to score in regulation and extra time. According to the organisers, the tournament is a way to repay the love Canada has shown to many African residents living in Manitoba, some of which were refugees admitted from war-torn African countries, as well as others fleeing poverty in their home countries. Meanwhile, Harouna Gueye was voted Player of the Tournament, while Jayshom emerged top scorer with 11 goals. Kenya's Samuel Kitonyo was voted best coach. This is the second edition of the tournament which the organisers plan to make an annual event. The first edition was won by Democratic Republic of Congo who defeated Eritrea in last year's final. Also, this year's tournament saw an increase in the number of participating teams from four to eight.

We are probably going to see Ronaldo and Messi play against each other, before their careers are over. This is made possible because of the Champions League draws for the group stages, which has been released by UEFA. Juventus and Barcelona have been grouped together, in Group G of the draws. Many soccer fans want to see the Ronaldo vs Messi rivalry continue, even if both players are nearing the end of their playing careers. The real question is who steps into their shoes, when they hang up their boots? Dortmund's Erling Haaland, is obviously one of those players. Haaland has left no one in doubt about his abilities upfront. He became the first teenager to score in five consecutive Champions League games last season, and the second teenager to score ten goals in the competition. It's no longer a matter of how many goals Halaand will score, when the competition kicks off again, this year, but how many clubs he will be scoring for. It is obvious that Real Madrid are already watching the Norwegian international, and may swoop on him any minute. It will be recalled that Halaand scored for both RB Salzburg and Borussia Dortmund last season. Another player to watch is the Portuguese Joao Felix, who is already being referred to as the new Ronaldo, not just because he hails from Portugal, like Cristiano, but because many already see, in him, that match-winning ability and an expressive flair

which characterized Cristiano Ronaldo's early career. Not only can he dribble and play as a winger, like Cristiano, Joao also has speed and great finishing. His technical skills are way past his age. Last year, Joao Felix became the youngest player to score a hattrick in the UEFA Europa league, at just 18 years of age. There's also the youth prodigy, from France, Kylian Mbappe, who appears to have leaped off the starting blocks in well enough time. Many football fans and pundits agree that Mbappe is well ahead of his time, the same thing they said about Edson Arantes do Nascimento, better known as Pele, by the football loving world. Mbappe already broke a lot of records, at such a young age. He's now 21. Just two years ago, at the FIFA World Cup, held in Russia, Mbappe became the second teenager in history, after Pele, to score in a World Cup final. He also holds the record as the youngest French player to ever score at the World Cup, overtaking the likes of Michel Platini and Thierry Henry. That's not all. By the time Mbappe had scored 13 goals in the Champions League, he had not even turned 20 yet, he was still 19. At that age, he had doubled the goals scored by Karim Benzema and Raul Gonzalez combined, in the competition, when they were his age. Another player to watch for is Barcelona's Messi annointed, Ansu Fati, who has just been piling it on since the exit of Luis Suarez. Fati can now be considered as

Barca's super sub and heir in waiting, for when Leo decides to hang up his boots. The Guinea-Bissau born Fati, who now represents Spain internationally, is the youngest of them all, and hails from a family of footballers. He is only 17 years old. His father (retired) and two brothers, Braima and Miguel (still playing) all live in Spain. Ansu Fati's prodigious talent was on display, in the Champions League game between Barcelona and Inter Milan, last season, when he scored the winning goal, at the San Siro, to become the youngest goal scorer, in UEFA Champions League history. And that's not all. This youth prodigy has broken all the records that there is to break in international football. He recently broke a 95 year-old record, in Spain, as the youngest player to score for *La Roja*, and, most recently, the youngest player to start in a UEFA Nation's League game. Having said much about these four players, who are all under 25 years, there's still Robert Lewandowski who became the first player to disrupt the Messi-Ronaldo flow, displacing both players, from the top of the scorers chart, last season, for the first time in twelve years. He also has the record for the fastest four goals scored in the competition - 16 minutes. And there is

PSG'S crown prince, Neymar, undoubtedly one of the best in the footballing business. And Kingsley Coman, who scored the only goal in Bayern's Champions League final win against PSG, last season.

Before the break

Premiership									
P	Club	GP	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	PTS
1.	Everton	4	4	0	0	12	5	7	12
2.	Aston Villa	3	3	0	0	11	2	9	9
3.	Leicester	4	3	0	1	12	7	5	9
4.	Arsenal	4	3	0	1	8	5	3	9
5.	Liverpool	4	3	0	1	11	11	0	9
6.	Tottenham	4	2	1	1	12	5	7	7

La Liga									
P	Club	GP	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	PTS
1.	Real Madrid	4	3	1	0	6	2	4	10
2.	Real Betis	5	3	0	2	7	6	1	9
3.	Real Sociedad	5	2	2	1	7	2	5	8
4.	Villarreal	5	2	2	1	6	7	-1	8
5.	Barcelona	3	2	1	0	8	1	7	7
6.	Sevilla	3	2	1	0	5	2	3	7

Serie A									
P	Club	GP	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	PTS
1.	Atalanta	3	3	0	0	13	5	8	9
2.	Milan	3	3	0	0	7	0	7	9
3.	Sassuolo	3	2	1	0	9	3	6	7
4.	Inter	3	2	1	0	10	6	4	7
5.	Napoli	2	2	0	2	8	0	8	6
6.	Verona	3	2	0	1	4	1	3	6

Bundesliga									
P	Club	GP	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	PTS
1.	Leipzig	3	2	1	0	8	2	6	7
2.	Augsburg	3	2	1	0	5	1	4	7
3.	Frankfurt	3	2	1	0	6	3	3	7
4.	Bayern	3	2	0	1	13	7	6	6
5.	Dortmund	3	2	0	1	7	2	5	6
6.	Hoffenheim	3	2	0	1	8	5	3	6

